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FOOD PRICE REVIEW

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A summary of the food outlook especially designed to give maximum advance information to food editors to help them plan food features.

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service

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MEAT: Total meat supplies in 1958 may run about the same as this year. And consumption per person is expected to total 158 pounds, compared with 159 pounds in 1957.

Beef: Supplies will probably decline in 1958. Beef consumption is forecast at 81 pounds, as against 84 pounds this year. Slaughter will include almost as many steers as in 1957, but fewer cows and heifers.

Pork: Hog production has already started upward, with the 1957 fall pig crop probably about 3 percent greater than the 1956 fall crop. Next spring's total pig crop will be up at least 7 percent, perhaps even as much as 8 to 10 percent. Consumption is forecast at 64 pounds next year, compared with this year's 62 pounds per person.

Lamb: Reduced lamb slaughter in the summer and fall of 1957 indicates interest in rebuilding sheep herds. Reduction did not occur early enough to have much effect on January 1, 1958, sheep numbers, but some buildup might result later on.

POULTRY: Broilers and Fryers: Supplies in 1958 are expected to climb slightly above the 1957 record of about 1.4 billion birds. This anticipated slight rise in output will raise per capita chicken consumption from 25.3 pounds this year to about 26 pounds in 1958.

Turkeys: Production may be cut from 5 to 10 percent from the record 80-1/2 million turkeys raised in 1957, with current prospects for sharper decline in output of small turkeys than the large birds.

Eggs: Fewer layers will be in production in 1958 than this year, but egg output per bird in 1958 will probably show another increase of 2 percent, as in the past 8 years. Annual farm production next year will likely be within 2 percent or so of the record 61 billion eggs produced in 1956 and 1957. Per capita supplies of eggs next year will probably decline as much as 5 percent from the 360 eggs now anticipated for 1957.

DAIRY: Milk production in 1958 is expected to increase slightly over 1957. And consumer demand for dairy products will likely hold to the high level of 1957.

FRUIT: Deciduous: Continued winter marketings include this year's apple crop, 16 percent greater than a year earlier, and cranberries, up 7 percent. Fall and winter pear production, which provides the main source of fresh pears after the year's turn, is about the same as last year's large crop. Storage supplies of Emperor grapes for winter marketing will be slightly larger than last year.

Citrus: The 1957-58 crop of early and mid-season oranges is about 3 percent larger than the previous crop. A sharp reduction in California is more than offset by increase in other States, particularly Florida, which has a record crop.

But Florida's tangerine production is 6 percent below last season. With increases reported in all producing States, grapefruit output, excluding the California summer crop, is about the same as last year.

Processed: Dried fruit output in 1957-58 is expected to total considerably below that of 1956-57. Dried prune supplies will be about as large as last year owing to a heavy carryover plus a crop slightly above average. Raisin supplies will be less, however, due to the shortest pack in several years.

Canned: The 1957-58 pack of canned deciduous fruits probably will be moderately smaller than the record 1956-57 pack. The new pack of canned peaches, purple plums, and fruit cocktail will be down from the previous season. New packs of sweet and sour cherries are up sharply, but these are only a relatively small part of the total pack. With increased carryover stocks from the 1956-57 pack, though, supplies of canned fruits probably will be about as large as the previous year. In Florida, carryover supplies of canned citrus juices are much larger than a year earlier.

Frozen: Total output of frozen fruits and fruit juices in 1957 is expected to be somewhat greater than last year. Present indications are for a small decline in pack of frozen strawberries, but the new pack of frozen cherries is a record. The 1956-57 pack of frozen orange concentrate in Florida was a record, and a further increase seems likely.

Tree Nuts: California almond production is only slightly above average, but with the carryover from last year, total supplies will be second largest of record. Filberts are a record crop, four times as great as last year's short output. Walnut crop is 4 percent below last year, and the pecan crop is 30 percent below 1956, and 12 percent below average.

VEGETABLES:

Fresh: Supplies of commercial vegetables for fresh market are expected to be significantly smaller this fall than last, but slightly above the 10-year average. Sizeable increases in snap beans, cucumbers, and lettuce, are more than offset by sharp declines in early fall cabbage, and smaller crops of broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, and Brussels sprouts.

Potatoes: Production of fall crop potatoes, which provides most of the winter's supply, is down 7 percent from last year. In the East the crop is slightly smaller than last year but the quality is exceptionally good; the Midwestern crop is smaller than last year, but supplies are heavier in the West. The winter crop in Florida and California will likely be smaller than last year.

Processed: Canned vegetable supplies into mid-1958 are expected to range slightly below the large supplies of last season, but substantially greater than the 10-year average. Supplies of tomatoes, tomato juice and most tomato products are likely to be considerably smaller than large supplies of the previous year. But green peas, corn, and snap beans are expected to be near record.

Frozen: At the beginning of the season frozen vegetable stocks were over a third larger than the previous year. Despite a smaller expected pack, frozen vegetables are expected to continue in record supply.

The Plentiful Foods Program

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, will support industry campaigns on the following commodities, at the following times:

BROILERS AND FRYERS	December 1 to 31, 1957
CANNED AND FROZEN PEAS	February 1 to March 1, 1958
DRIED PRUNES	March 1 to 31, 1958
CEREAL AND MILK	April 1 to 30, 1958
JUNE DAIRY MONTH	June 1 to 30, 1958